

THE TROUBLESHOOTER

Whenever trouble is about to break out
the saloon-keeper sends for the trouble shooter.

When he arrives, he invariably smiles a smile
big as Alaska and says, "All right, fellas,
what seems to be the trouble here?"

Then each of the potential troublemakers
has a chance to tell his side of the story.

When they are all done,
The Troubleshooter draws
and plugs anyone even remotely involved in the
unpleasantness.

Afterwards he blows on the smoking tips of his
as if they were spoonfuls of piping hot
cream of tomato soup.

If the saloon-keeper tries to offer thanks,
The Troubleshooter invariably replies,
"All in a day's work."

He moonlights on Gordian Knots and Horny Dilemmas.

SMALL FRY/SMALL TALK

Through circumstances beyond my control,
I hadn't seen my little boy in weeks.
When I ran into him, he was riding his bike,
and was waiting for his permanent front teeth.

I hugged and kissed him and said,
"How have you been?"

"I don't know," he said.

Small talk is wasted on kids.
Try it and you'll only end up
feeling like an idiot.
They know the questions you ask can't be
answered in a phrase.
Had I expected him to say, "Oh I've been wonderful.
It's great having a father and mother
who aren't speaking to each other."

So I patted him on the back and he rode on,
he who before the separation
used to hurl himself into my arms
and want me never to let go of him.

I'm not sure just how I've been either, John.

A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO SOCIETY

I am against making guns illegal.
I am, however, proposing legislation
for the registration of guitars.

Guns will be necessary
to shoot the guitar violators.

A PROFUNDITY

Awaiting a Bogey movie
I caught the tail-end of the red-neck news.

This very highly paid anchor man
leaned out of the tube
to conclude his report on the death of Euell Gibbons
with, "He who advocated natural foods,
died of natural causes."

PHASES

no matter what i got interested in as a kid,
whether it was girls or poetry or growing a beard,
if my mother didn't approve of it, she invariably
dismissed it with, "it's only a phase; he'll grow out of it."

then last sunday chuck and ron and i were sitting
in this mexican bar and they were giving me a ration of shit.

"yeah," chuck said, "i don't see much of the bear anymore --
he's into his foosball phase."

"i understand," ron said,
"i suffered through his billiards and his spook obsessions."